

every person in this country. We believe it is also self-evident that such service cannot be provided unless some one pays the bill. Good medical service costs money and must be paid for. One expedient suggested to make such service available for the large class of population which needs it most, is compulsory social insurance. It is a poor crutch and better are in sight, to be sure. But the purpose of social insurance is strictly and avowedly medical. If it does not provide for satisfactory payment for satisfactory medical service, it will defeat its own avowed ends. If this be true, and we are convinced that it is true, then the details of securing satisfactory and adequate medical service under any social insurance plan is not only of the utmost importance but is absolutely essential and vital for the success of the entire scheme. Like so many other present-day institutions, if the factor of adequate medical service is omitted, what, in the name of reason, is left?

It may be argued that, regardless of payment for value received, some such plan might be conceivably thrust down the throat of the medical profession. If such a misfortune should occur, the insured would pay in their receipt of inadequate medical service. Here, as in all questions which pertain primarily to the public health, the interests of the doctor are literally and strictly the interests of the public. Social insurance, like industrial medicine, is ethically and primarily a public health question, and only from the same standpoints, secondarily an economic question. On the front of Dr. Green's pamphlet appear the pregnant words of Gladstone, "In the health of the people lies the wealth of the nation." Their truth is being demonstrated more and more. Health first, and sound economics will follow. Health laws lie deeper than economic laws, as witness the Panama canal. It is to assume that leadership in this broad field of health promotion for which he is specifically trained, that the physician must constantly bestir himself and ally himself with an educated and alert public.

Disagreement with the beginning argument of Dr. Green does not in any wise decrease our thorough accord with his conclusions nor does it lessen our hearty endorsement of his statement of the five alternatives besides compulsory health insurance, all better adapted to meet the problem that compulsory health insurance seeks imperfectly to meet. These alternatives are as follows:

1. Provision of a living and adequate wage.
2. Prevention of preventible disease by public health agencies, thus lightening the individual burden of sickness.
3. Development of individual thrift and savings to provide for a rainy day.
4. Development of voluntary industrial insurance in groups by employers and employees. This is a practical and efficient and coming method.
5. Development of voluntary benefit associations.

Dr. Green's article is worthy the careful perusal of every physician. It will provide argu-

ment and data well adapted to drive out ignorance and inculcate a sane attitude toward the necessary part the medical profession must play in making adequate medical service available for all the people.

"CHRISTIAN SCIENCE HEALERS EXEMPT FROM LICENSE TAX"

"Christian Science practitioners are exempt from all taxation in the list of professions included in the new license ordinance that went into effect July 1. A decision to this effect was rendered last evening by City Attorney George Lull, who states that the term 'drugless practitioner' does not refer to a Christian Science practitioner," says the San Francisco Chronicle under date of July 16. Lull says in rendering his decision:

"In view of the indefiniteness of the term 'drugless practitioner,' and the fact that the term 'Christian Science practitioner' is a well-known designation of a school, and the decision of the committee not to include Christian Science practitioners upon whom a license tax should be imposed, I advise you that no license tax can be collected from Christian Science practitioners."

It would seem to an innocent bystander who is accustomed to weighing things without any reference to election returns, that regardless of the method of treatment or the alleged curative agency employed, that anyone who is permitted by law to treat the sick or who professes to cure the sick under any system, and charges for it, should not be given special favors when others are taxed. Commercial healing as a money-making occupation, business or profession does not seem to deserve any discrimination in its favor simply because it may be associated with religion in one guise or another. The text of the new license ordinance does not seem to be concerned with the school, sect or system of healing, but the peculiar interpretation of this new law seems to be that where one is engaged in healing for hire, whether the patient is present or absent, and couples with his charges a certain religious belief, that then he is entitled to exemption from all taxation.

It will thus be seen that the class of practitioners which is placed above the application of this new law, by the city administration, is practically given a special franchise, without any license tax, to exercise its form of healing commercially.

THE EDDIAN FRATRICIDAL WAR

It is a rare week that some suit is not filed by some faction of the Eddian Science Church against another hostile faction. Some of the very sincere and devout men and women who thought to find in Eddian science peace on earth and good will among men, together with a balm for all their ills, spiritual and physical, are awakening to find their dream rudely shattered.

They find that instead of "ever-present harmony and peace" "mortal belief is unmasking and exposing its evil claims." The trustees of the Christian Science Publishing Society claim the